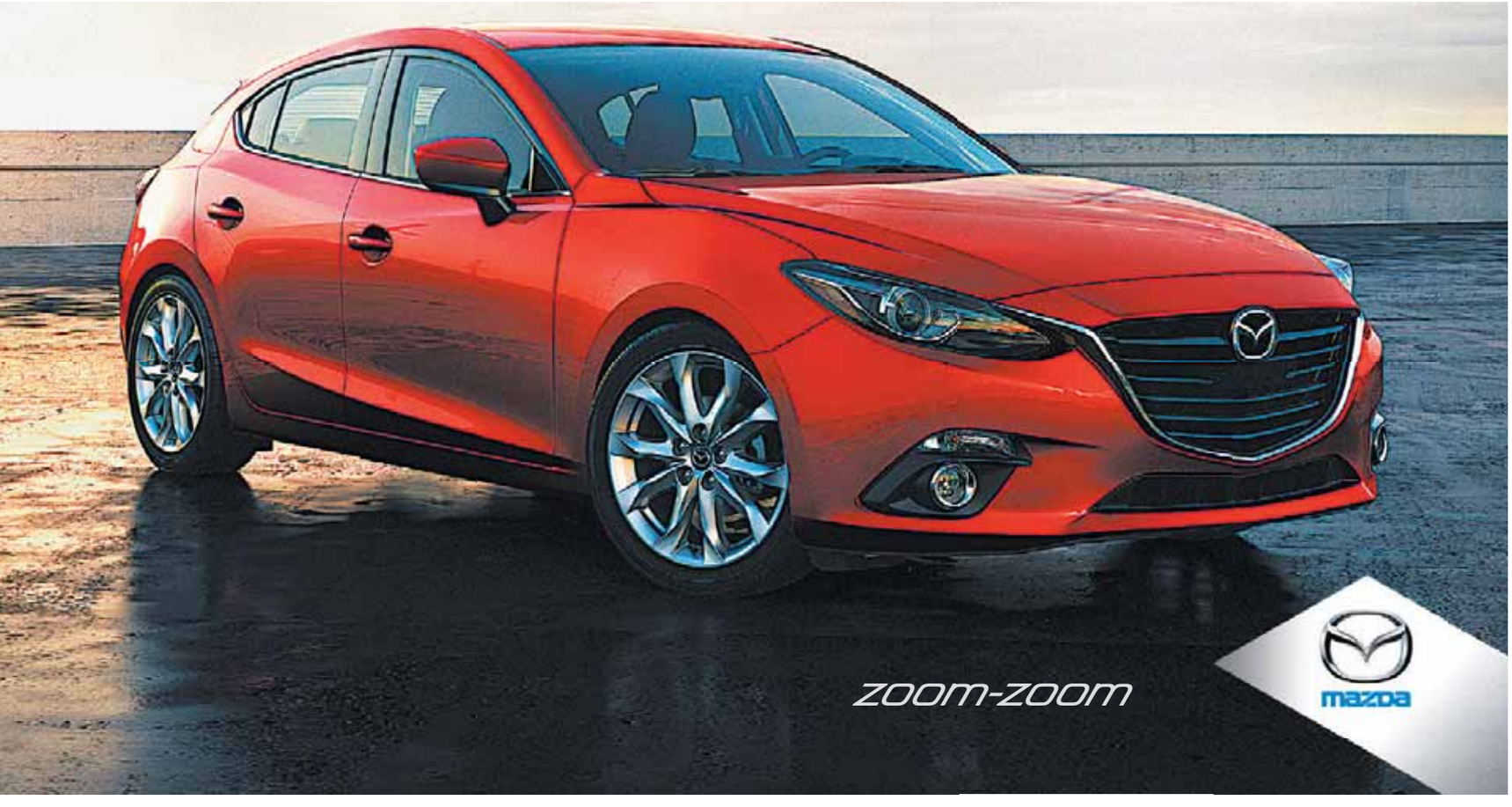
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Off with their paycheques!

Hammer falls in expense scandal with Duffy, Brazeau and Wallin suspended from Senate without pay PAGE 9

Twitter faaaail #youre fired

We review cases in which bad tweets, comments and posting went awry PAGE 21

EXCLUSIVE TO METRO

SHANNON'S 'DATE' AT MISTER MCFUNBURY'S INCLUDES 3-FOR-1 MARTINIS, TRASHING THE 3 SARAHS AND A LANGUAGE LESSON PAGE 11

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NOTHING LEFT TO HIDE?

Toronto Mayor Rob Ford addresses media on Tuesday. Ford, after finally admitting to the public that he smoked crack cocaine, offered an emotional apology for his "mistakes" but said he loves his job and has no plans to step aside. Story, page 8. CHRIS YOUNG/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Premiers reach pipeline deal

Framework secured. Alberta agrees to B.C.'s five conditions for energy projects

The premiers of B.C. and Alberta ended their year-long clash over energy transportation Tuesday, clearing a major barrier for B.C.'s approval of heavy-oil-pipeline expansion.

Christy Clark and Alison Redford hosted an unexpected press conference in Vancouver, announcing Alberta has agreed to B.C.'s five conditions that Clark says will ensure the responsible production of energy as well as its safe transport.

In return, B.C. has agreed not to touch any of Alberta's royalties or taxes from energy projects, including the proposed Enbridge Northern Gateway pipeline.

"I very much look forward to continuing our discussions with the province of Alberta and Premier Redford to grow our economies and strengthen the economy of Canada," Clark said.

Quoted

"While you'll always find people who oppose any project, I believe that the five conditions, when they are satisfied, will go a long way to satisfying a lot of people's concerns about the projects that are proposed."

Premier Christy Clark

Under the five conditions, Alberta has agreed any energy-transportation deal must pass an environmental review, meet world-class standards for spill response on land and sea, include First Nations participation and include a fair share of economic benefits for B.C.

That fair share won't include royalties — a real sticking point in negotiations — but B.C., under the new framework, will be able to negotiate directly with energy producers.

Redford said it took a while for the two premiers to reach an agreement because the terms were too vague and she needed to understand what B.C. meant by them.

"There's no doubt that the fifth condition of course is a real preoccupation for Alberta, and we think it's important, and we appreciate the fact that Premier Clark has said that taxes and royalties are not on the table," Redford said.

B.C. NDP Leader Adrian Dix accused Clark of flip-flopping on her demands and slammed her for "misleading the voters" with her tough talk during the election campaign.

"It's clear today that what the premier was saying before the election, all those stunts at federal/provincial conferences were like an episode of Seinfeld — about nothing," Dix said.

SAM SMITH/FOR METRO

MORE COVERAGE, PAGE 3

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Beating out other cities

Vancouver to host 2025 Alcoholics Anonymous convention

Vancouver expects a $71-million windfall for hosting 48,000 people committed to a 12-step program — in 2025.

The massive International Convention of Alcoholics Anonymous has chosen Vancouver to host the once-every-five-years gathering, which is expected to be the "single largest meeting ever held in the city," Tourism Vancouver announced Tuesday.

The city's hospitality industry is celebrating the anticipated economic benefits from the event, which will see delegates from more than 75 countries visit the convention centre and BC Place to share their experiences with alcoholism and celebrate sobriety.

Vancouver finally beat out cities including Montreal, St. Louis, Minneapolis and Denver for the chance to host the bevy of teetotalers a decade after it first bid for the conference.

It was chosen for its infrastructure, award-winning facilities (the province crowed about the appeal of the convention centre and stadium), close-knit hospitality community and "inspiring location" with ocean and mountain views, according to Tourism Vancouver. "Orchestrating and winning a bid of this magnitude took time and patience, and is the direct result of A.A.'s local community approaching us in the mid-'90s — they have been our steadfast inspiration ever since," Jacqueline Venear of Tourism Vancouver said in a statement.

"The benefits of a group of this size will be felt throughout our entire hospitality industry, from hotels and taxi operators to retailers and restaurants," said Joann Pfeifer, chair of the Vancouver Hotel Destination Association.

EMILY JACKSON/METRO

Premier Christy Clark and Alberta Premier Alison Redford meet prior to a news conference in Vancouver on Tuesday. JONATHAN HAYWARD/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Redford applauded after 'fair share' deal

Economic potential.
All sides acknowledged that the framework agreement is simply one step toward getting Alberta's landlocked oil reserves to lucrative Asian markets

KATE WEBB
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B.C. business leaders gave visiting Alberta Premier Alison Redford a standing ovation on Tuesday after she and Premier Christy Clark struck an agreement that B.C. should take its demands for a "fair share" of pipeline profits directly to industry.

"Yay!" was the gleeful, one-word reaction from Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers vice-president Greg Stringham when he was asked on stage at a Vancouver Board of Trade luncheon for his reaction to the news.

The laughs that followed conveyed the jubilant mood in the room, which was packed with representatives of energy giants such as Suncor and Kinder Morgan.

Northern Gateway communications manager Ivan Giesbrecht told Metro in a phone interview later on that Enbridge was "pleased and encouraged" by the news, and is open to discussing with the province what B.C.'s "fair share" might look like.

Talks between provincial officials broke down the night before, with Alberta rejecting B.C.'s most recent suggestion that there should be a tax or toll on heavy oil crossing the province. Alberta has long flatly refused to consider sharing any of its royalties.

The agreement between the premiers puts the ball firmly back in Enbridge's court to appease the B.C. government if it wants its troubled Northern Gateway proposal for a diluted bitumen pipeline from Alberta to Kitimat to go forward.

Still, all sides acknowledged that the framework agreement is simply one step toward getting Alberta's landlocked oil reserves to lucrative Asian markets.

Will Horter, executive director of the environmental Dogwood Initiative, derided the industry's optimism, saying in a statement that "a deal negotiated behind closed doors to ease the pathway for expanding oil tanker traffic on B.C.'s wild coast will be fiercely resisted by a majority of British Columbians.

"Today's announcement does not change the fact that there is significant and widespread opposition of First Nations to these proposals," he wrote, "making it unlikely Enbridge will be able to satisfy Clark's fourth condition related to First Nations rights and consultation."

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Composite sketch of UBC attacker released

Crime. RCMP say sketch was based on statements by six victims of sexual assault

Mounties have released a composite sketch of the man believed to be behind six sexual assaults at the University of British Columbia. COURTESY OF RCMP

The recollections of six women who were attacked while they walked alone at the University of British Columbia have helped Mounties produce a composite sketch of the man believed to be behind the fear that has swept the campus.

The sketch, released Tuesday, shows a slightly unshaven man wearing a hooded sweater. He is described as being Caucasian, with an olive or darker skin tone, a rounder chin, broad forehead, straight nose and short dark hair.

The man is also described as having a tall, thin build, and is believed to be in his mid-20s to 30s.

RCMP spokesman Sgt. Peter Thiessen told a news conference the composite sketch was based on statements by the six victims. He also said investigators with the major crimes section have received more than 20 tips related to the series of attacks that began in April, with three women being assaulted in separate incidents last month alone.

But Thiessen said while RCMP have compiled a list of persons of interest, they have yet to identify the suspect.

Quoted

"We're as frustrated as anybody else that this individual has not been identified."

Sgt. Peter Thiessen

"We are doing everything we possibly can, we are utilizing ... every tool in our toolbox to identify this individual," he said.

RCMP has bike patrols, a dog squad, and teams specializing in behavioural science, criminal and geographic profiles, and crime analysis on the investigation. The six women were all attacked as they walked alone late at night on campus. Three of the attacks occurred in October, with the most recent one happening just over a week ago. One incident was reported in late September and investigators announced last month that separate incidents in April and May are also connected.

The sexual assaults have led to heightened security measures at UBC, including increased campus patrols and extended hours for the free Safewalk program that allows students to be walked home with two people late at night. A new program called Rezwalk has also been introduced.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Vancouver wants civic names to reflect multicultural population

With names like Hastings, Abbott and Davie, Vancouver streets pay homage to the British faction of the city's past while mostly ignoring First Nations and Asian heritage.

But to better reflect the city's multicultural makeup, city council voted Tuesday to shake up the five-person committee that names civic assets.

"There's nobody on committee not of European ancestry, which did sort of highlight for me a potential gap in membership," Coun. Andrea Reimer said.

Council unanimously passed Reimer's motion to appoint two people from both the multicultural and urban aboriginal committees on the naming committee, a move Reimer hopes will expand the discussion of civic names.

"It is a sticky and challenging issue to deal with," Reimer said, but she added the dominant culture in Vancouver is not the majority culture.

A first step could be street name changes in the Downtown Eastside area formerly known as Japantown in light of the city's apology to Japanese Canadians interned during the war, Coun. Kerry Jang suggested.

There are a handful of streets and areas named for First Nations (Kitsilano is an anglicized version of Khahtsahlano, a Squamish Chief), Chinese (Sotao Avenue) and French (Quesnel Street) heritage, but the grand majority are named for white British men, according to an exhaustive 1999 directory published by Elizabeth Walker of the Vancouver Historical Society.

EMILY JACKSON/METRO

‘Positive approach’ to problem gambling

City hall. Council votes to co-operate with health officials, casinos to address issue

EMILY JACKSON
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The city, its casinos and the health authority are all working together — for now — to hamper problem gambling.

City council passed a motion Tuesday to meet with casino operators and Vancouver Coastal Health to ensure the gaming facilities address recommendations in a recent report about the high health stakes of gambling in B.C.

“We’ve got to keep (gambling) on the fun side and not let it cross over to the dangerous side,” Coun. Kerry Jang said, citing provincial health officer Perry Kendall’s report on the increasing rate of problem gamblers.

The city is taking a “positive approach” and working together with operators like Paragon, the company relocating the Edgewater Casino to a new “urban-resort”-style development next to BC Place.

“Presently I have not seen anything to give me concern. However, we want to make sure it stays that way,” Jang said, noting the move could result in changes of availability for games.

“If we need to lower the boom, there is all sorts of permitting and things like that we can use.”

The city manager has already given the heads-up to parties involved about potential discussions.

Council got a reputation for being tough on gambling when it voted against an expanded Edgewater Casino in 2011.

The present discussions are intended to raise confidence among citizens that the city requires casinos to operate at the highest standards to reduce harm, Coun. Geoff Meggs said.

Follow Emily Jackson on Twitter @theemilyjackson

A rendering of the planned urban resort, which will include the relocated Edgewater Casino. CONTRIBUTED

Performing arts. Council approves ‘theatrical hub’

The two largest theatre companies in Western Canada will be the stars of a new “theatrical hub” in False Creek.

City council voted unanimously Tuesday to lease the 43,936-square-foot space on West 1 Avenue and Columbia Street to the Arts Club and Bard on the Beach for 60 years.

It will shell out $7 million from the 2014 capital budget to further develop the first two floors of two residential towers, slated to become rehearsal space, a place for costume storage, offices and a 250-seat theatre.

The performance centre was promised in a 2006 rezoning that let developer Wall Financial Corporation build 550 residential units in four towers.

The developer’s community amenity contribution of $7.6 million went toward building the space, which was designed to accommodate the performance companies.

The city hopes its contribution will encourage the senior governments, along with donors to the two organizations, to fund the remaining $5.8 million needed.

Council, staff and the arts organizations celebrated the move as creating a “one-stop shop” that will reduce costs for the companies and encourage collaboration.

“It’s not just about the theatre itself,” Arts Club director Howard Jang told council. The facilities will allow it to expand youth programs such as playwriting and musical theatre training for high school students, he said.

Coun. George Affleck added: “This to me is the definition of how a community amenity contribution should be used in the city.”

The first productions in the new theatre are anticipated to take place in 2015 or 2016, depending on construction.

The Arts Club will be leaving its Granville Island theatre, The Revue Stage. The future of the current venue is unknown.

EMILY JACKSON/METRO

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Vancouver team aims to build the world's first racing robot

Going out on a limb. Prosthesis: The Anti-Robot will be activated by a human pilot, with its limbs responding to the pilot's movements

KATE WEBB
kate.webb@metronews.ca

Prosthesis is itching for the green light.

Back in April, Metro told you first about Prosthesis: The Anti-Robot — a three-tonne, five-metre-tall electric running machine that a group of engineers is building in an unassuming East Vancouver laboratory.

On Monday, the team launched an Indiegogo campaign to try to raise $100,000 so they can complete the beast by 2015.

The promo video for the campaign offers some hilarious insights into the eccentric imagination of lead artist and engineer Jonathan Tippett, who dreamed up the high-performance machine seven years ago. (To watch the video, head to Metronews.ca and search "Prosthesis.")

Tippett is in New York this week showcasing a prototype of the robot's front leg at the prestigious Engadget tech conference.

"Prosthesis is neither a weapon nor a tool," he said in a statement.

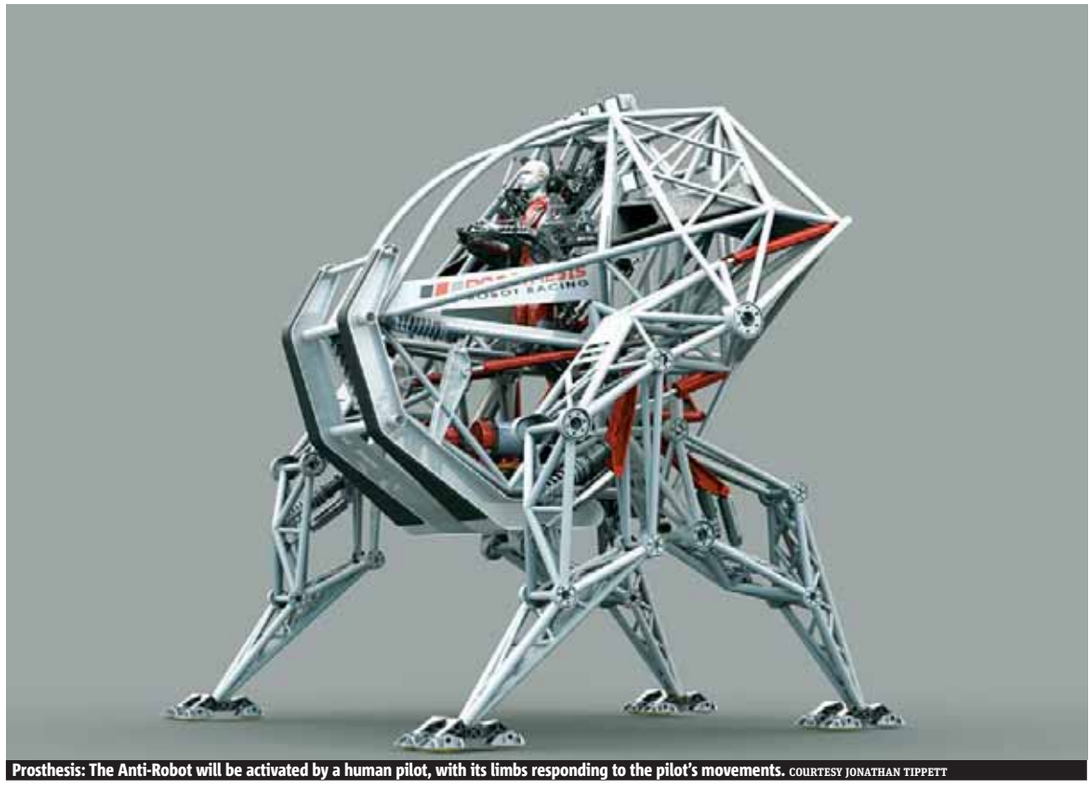
"It is a sports machine, and the pilot is the athlete. It's Formula One meets the future."

Once complete, he said Prosthesis will be the world's first racing robot, capable of reaching speeds of 25 kilometres per hour and even jumping.

The volunteers from Vancouver non-profit eatART are no strangers to this kind of project. They have already made headlines around the world with their giant electric Mondo Spider and robotic snake named Titanoboa.

"It's an exciting time for us right now. There is a lot of buzz. People are really taking notice," Tippett said.

"After years of work and careful planning, the dream is about to become a reality. We've got the team, the plans and the space to build. Once we get funding, we're good to go."



Prosthesis: The Anti-Robot will be activated by a human pilot, with its limbs responding to the pilot's movements. COURTESY JONATHAN TIPPETT

Burnaby wants to know: What's in the train that passes through here?

The City of Burnaby wants the right to know which dangerous goods are being transported through the city by rail.

But according to a staff report presented at Burnaby city council Monday, the federal government and railways have stonewalled the city.

"We were able to gain very generalized information about the types of dangerous goods transported by rail but we weren't able to receive any specific information or which trains were carrying those dangerous goods," said Burnaby Mayor Derek Corrigan. "So it's very difficult to prepare yourself for an emergency when you're totally in the dark."

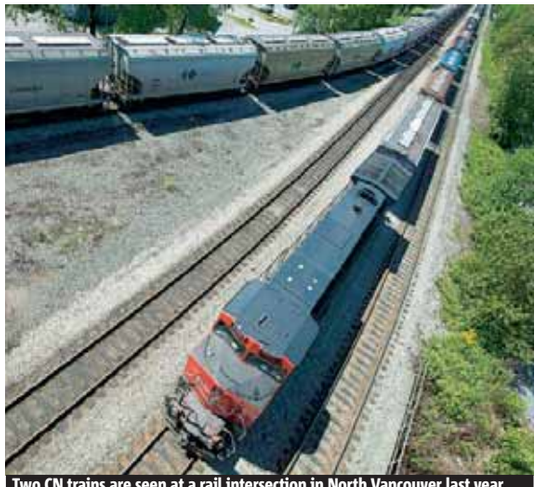
Corrigan said staff pressured the federal government to find out the specifics of the goods but they kept getting non-satisfactory answers.

"They say it's not available, so they either don't keep any record or we can't be informed because of private interests of the railway companies," he said. "We would like to know what's coming through so we know what our first responders would have to deal with."

Corrigan says city staff will continue pressuring upper levels of government for more information but he's unsure how far that will get them.

"When you try to get provincial government to stand up on your behalf, they tend to look at their own interests," he said, adding the federal government doesn't feel much need to deal with local governments either.

SAM SMITH/FOR METRO



Two CN trains are seen at a rail intersection in North Vancouver last year. The City of Burnaby wants the right to know more about the goods being transported through by rail. THE CANADIAN PRESS FILE

Budget. City overspent by hundreds of millions of dollars: Watchdog

Vancouver overspent its operating budget by hundreds of millions of dollars from 2000 to 2011, according to a new report released Tuesday by the Canadian Federation of Independent Business (CFIB).

"The vast majority of B.C.'s municipalities have charted an unsustainable course over the past decade," said Mike Klassen, B.C. director of CFIB. "While some city councils are working hard to get their fiscal house in order, the rest seem to be oblivious to today's economic challenges."

CFIB's report states that, adjusting for inflation and population growth, Vancouver increased its operating spending by 31 per cent from 2000 to 2011.

This, along with Victoria's increase of 26 per cent, accounts for $1.1 billion in excess spending, according to CFIB.

But Vancouver City Hall is no stranger to CFIB's reports and stated in May the federation puts out false information.

"Our fiscal record over the past five years is one of the best in Canada, and hysterical claims by the CFIB have no basis in reality," said Mayor Gregor Robertson at the time. "The real problem isn't overspending, it's the continued downloading of senior government responsibilities onto local governments."

SAM SMITH/FOR METRO

Quoted

"Hysterical claims by the CFIB have no basis in reality."

Mayor Gregor Robertson, earlier this year

Feds not walking green talk: Audit

Conservative black thumb. Environment commissioner trashes underachieving Tory conservation record

A massive audit of federal conservation policies paints a picture of mismanagement and neglect when it comes to Canada's natural heritage.

The study by Neil Maxwell, the commissioner of the environment and sustainable development, repeatedly points to a lack of strategies, plans and resources required to maintain or improve everything from basic biodiversity and species at risk to the national parks.

"I see a wide gap between the government's commitments and the results achieved," Maxwell says in the preface to the report.

At a news conference, he was more emphatic. "The most important thing is they have to demonstrate — given the track record is one of missed commitments, failing to act on past commitments — it's really up to the government to demonstrate they're serious in terms of taking action," Maxwell said.

The commissioner's talk-versus-action concern was graphically illustrated shortly after the audits were tabled Tuesday morning in the House of Commons, when Environment Minister Leona Aglukkaq issued a response that ignored the report's clear thrust.

The Conservative government has made a political virtue of creating new national parks and protected wildlife areas, but the audits tabled in Parliament make the government rhetoric ring hollow.

At Canada's national parks, funding for "heritage resources conservation" — effectively the natural beauty of the parks — decreased by 15 per cent last year compared with the preceding six years. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Too little action

"It's really up to the government to demonstrate they're serious."

Neil Maxwell, Canada's commissioner of the environment, about the "wide gap" his audit found between the government's goals and results on the environment file.

War wounds

Military missions making kids sick

The strain of two decades of overseas mission is hurting the children and spouses of Canadian Forces members, says an in-depth study by military ombudsman Pierre Daigle.

His latest report, released Tuesday, found the health and the grades of children suffer when their parents deploy to Afghanistan, Haiti or other trouble spots around the world.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Good life is here

Canada top-tier in well-being list

Canada is among the world's top spots for individual well-being, according to a report by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development.

Australia, Sweden, Switzerland, Denmark, the U.S. and Norway also made the top category. The OECD says the countries in the top tier scored in the top 20 per cent in all 11 major categories assessed.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

'We are legion' in Halifax, too

Dozens of people wearing Guy Fawkes masks marched in Halifax Tuesday to shed a light on issues like bullying, corruption, animal rights and sexual violence. The event was part of the worldwide Million Mask March of members of the hacktivist group Anonymous, which coincided with Guy Fawkes Day on Nov. 5. JEFF HARPER/METRO IN HALIFAX

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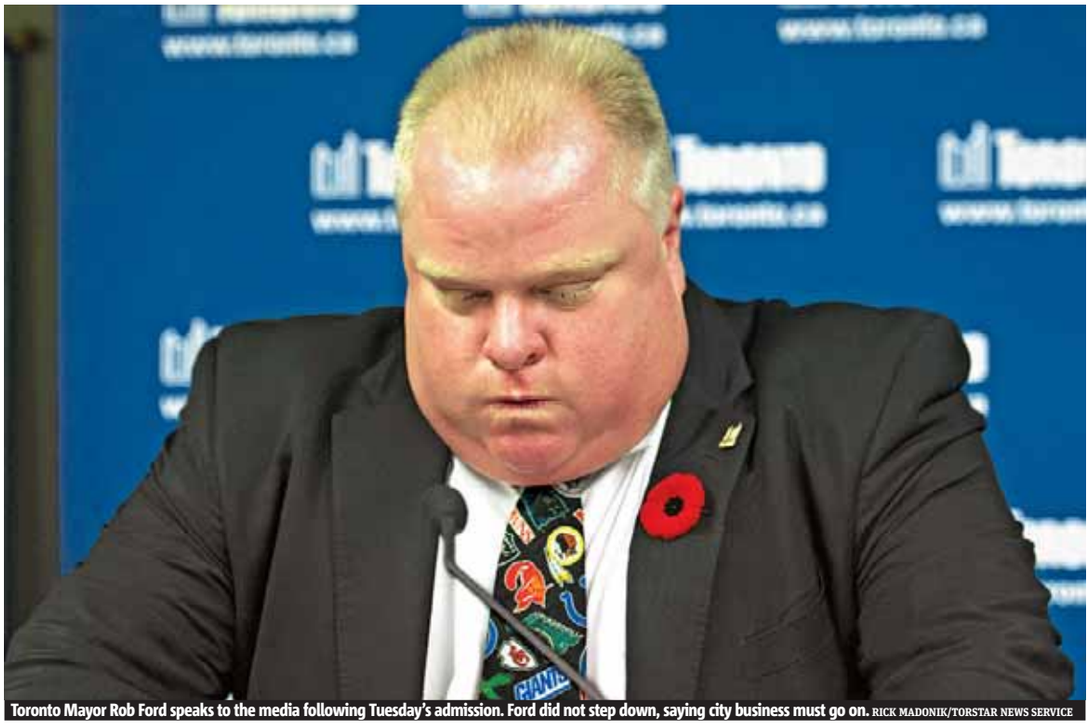
Toronto Mayor Rob Ford speaks to the media following Tuesday's admission. Ford did not step down, saying city business must go on. RICK MADONIK/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Confession. Councillors trying to strip Toronto mayor of powers as he refuses to leave office

The mayor of Canada's largest city vowed to remain in office Tuesday despite revealing he had smoked crack cocaine while in a "drunken stupor" — an admission that reversed months of firm denials.

"Yes! I've smoked crack cocaine!" said Mayor Rob Ford. "Am I an addict? No. Have I tried it? Probably in one of my drunken stupors."

The mayor of Toronto said he tried the drug about a year ago, while he was in office.

Ford has been under intense scrutiny since May, when two media outlets reported on a video they said appeared to show the mayor smoking crack. Ford had defiantly denied he used the drug and suggested the video did not exist.

Hours after his surprise statement, a visibly troubled Ford made an emotional apology for his "mistakes" but said he had no plans to step aside.

"I was elected to do a job and that's exactly what I'm going to continue doing," he said. "To the residents of Toronto, I know I have let you down. And I can't do anything else but apologize."

Ford said he kept his drug use from his family, staff and colleagues because he was "embarrassed and ashamed."

Ford again called for the video to be released so everyone could judge its contents.

"I don't even recall there being a tape or a video.... So I want to see the state that I was in."

Ford's backtracking had many shaking their heads, but the mayor insisted he had been truthful.

"I wasn't lying," he told reporters. "You didn't ask the correct questions. No, I'm not an addict and, no, I do not do drugs."

Nonetheless, at city hall some who worked with Ford said his latest admission was a clear sign that he needed to step back and get help.

A member of Ford's executive committee said some councillors were bringing a motion against the mayor that could strip him of some of his powers. Municipal law makes no provision for his forced removal unless he's jailed for a criminal offence. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Foreign press

U.S. chuckles at the drama

Rob Ford's shocking admission clashes with the image many foreigners have of Canada, a political expert said Tuesday as the news took the world media by storm.

"It either breaks the narrative of the uptight Canadians or it plays to another narrative they have of the very liberal Canadians," said Peter Graefe, a political-science professor at McMaster University.

Within moments of the confession, it was splashed across major news websites abroad, including CNN and the BBC. Several U.S. networks carried the mayor's second news conference live.

The scandal has been a particular favourite with U.S. media, with some comparing the Ford affair to the case of former Washington, D.C., mayor Marion Barry, who was busted smoking crack cocaine by an FBI sting in 1990.

Ford has also been a recurring target for late-night talk shows. Even serious news outlets have taken a more lighthearted tone, something Graefe attributes to distance.

"It's not news when it's in other cities.... It's comedy."

A story posted on the Washington Post's website highlighted the vastly different reactions stirred by the Ford and Barry scandals.

"It's a different world now than it was in 1990," Clinton Yates wrote in the piece.

"In those days, it was a reason to vilify a majority-black city for a drug epidemic that took countless lives."

Ford's name was trending on Twitter for much of Tuesday.

"Rob Ford's crack habit is the only thing I know about Canadian politics. I wonder if I'm alone in that. (Probably not.)," read a tweet from New York.

Ford's supporters defended him online, saying he's been picked on by police and media alike.

"I think @TorontoPolice should leave @TOMayorFord alone. Months of air surveillance is excessive and ridiculous," one wrote.

"I love Rob Ford man you do your thing, we've all used illicit drugs at some point. Don't let the haters bring you down," said another. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Law

"The police service and the judicial system have to take action. But the mayor will have to make his decisions about what is appropriate right now."
Ontario Premier Kathleen Wynne

Order

"It's certainly a sad day for the city of Toronto.... I'm the justice minister; you know where I stand on the use of illegal drugs. As a human being, I think that the mayor of Toronto needs to get help."
Conservative MP Peter MacKay

Health

"I look forward to seeing Rob Ford get the help he obviously needs."
Federal Liberal Leader Justin Trudeau

Responsibility

"I sincerely hope Mr. Ford will do the right thing for Toronto and the right thing for himself, which includes taking care of himself properly."
Federal NDP Leader Thomas Mulcair

Sochi 2014

Olympic relay to make stop in space

For the first time in history, the Olympic torch will be taken on a spacewalk.

The 2014 Sochi Winter Olympics torch will be sent to the International Space Station on board a Russian spacecraft this week, and astronauts will then carry it outside.

The torch will travel into Earth's orbit with the next space-station crew, who blast off early Thursday from Kazakhstan in a Russian Soyuz rocket, which has been emblazoned with the emblem of the Sochi Winter Games.

For safety reasons, the torch will not burn when it's on board the space outpost. Lighting it would consume precious oxygen and pose a threat to the crew. The crew will carry the unlit torch around the station's numerous modules before taking it out on a spacewalk.

The Olympic torch has flown into space before — in 1996 aboard the U.S. space shuttle Atlantis for the Atlanta Summer Olympics — but it has not yet been taken outside a spacecraft.

The torch will stay in space for five days until the returning crew takes it back to Earth next Monday. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Up to $300,000

Feds budget cash to curb sexual violence

The federal government is inviting proposals from community organizations to prevent online harassment and other sexual violence against girls and women.

One category of eligible projects involves preventing and eliminating cyberviolence, such as Internet bullying, luring and cyberstalking.

The second stream is aimed at helping sexual-assault centres or community service providers prevent and respond to such violence.

Projects at the local level could be given up to $175,000 over two years, while national initiatives are eligible for up to $300,000 over three years. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Over and out: Senate votes to suspend Duffy, Wallin, Brazeau

Expense scandal.
Drawn-out proceedings finally end with the trio losing pay, privileges for the duration of the parliamentary session

Patrick Brazeau, left, and Pamela Wallin are seen leaving the Senate Tuesday. Senators voted to suspend Wallin, Brazeau and Mike Duffy for allegedly claiming improper expenses. SEAN KILPATRICK/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Mike Duffy, Pamela Wallin and Patrick Brazeau were cast Tuesday into political limbo — suspended by the Senate and reviled by their former Conservative colleagues, including the prime minister who appointed them.

All three have maintained they're the victims of a politically motivated witch hunt aimed at putting a lid on a Senate expenses scandal that has engulfed Stephen Harper's government for almost a year.

"I think it's an extremely sad day for democracy," Wallin said as she exited the Senate chamber after the vote, her voice heavy with emotion.

"If we can't expect the rule of law in Canada, then where on earth can you expect it?"

Brazeau said nothing as he left the Senate. Duffy did not show up for the vote.

The trio retain the title of senator and their health, dental and life insurance coverage, but get no pay and lose their Senate privileges and resources for the duration of the current parliamentary session, which could continue for two years.

Harper's office expressed satisfaction with the suspensions, which followed weeks of emotional, often explosive debate, punctuated by bombshell revelations from Duffy that directly implicated the Prime Minister's Office in the scandal.

"Removing these three senators from the public payroll was the right thing to do," the PMO said in a statement.

"They should not be collecting a public paycheque."

While the vote to suspend the trio marks the end of a protracted and politically damaging debate, the shock waves wrought by Duffy are still reverberating for Harper and his Conservative government.

The RCMP is investigating the three senators, as well as former Liberal senator Mac Harb, and the steady drip of revelations from police documents filed in court is sure to continue to keep the scandal front and centre.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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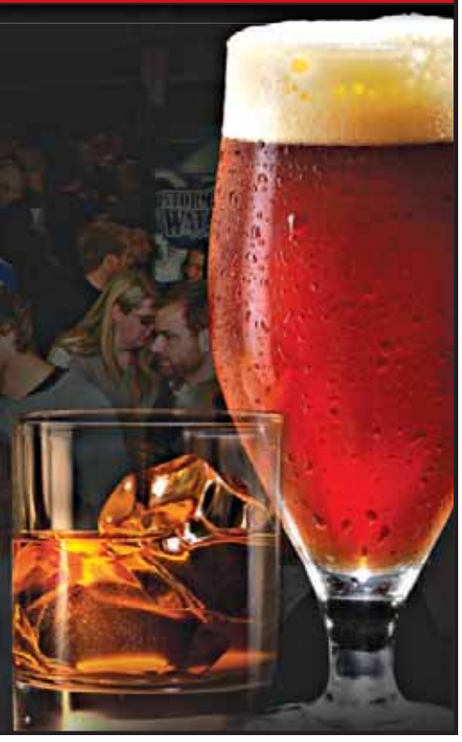

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San Franciscans search for answers to barge mystery

X marks the spot.
Residents are buzzing about the structure Google is building at Treasure Island

San Francisco's mayor says he doesn't know what it is. Police say it's not their jurisdiction. And government inspectors are sworn to secrecy.

Google is erecting a four-storey structure in the heart of the San Francisco Bay but is managing to conceal its purpose by constructing it on docked barges instead of on land, where city building permits and public plans are mandatory. Construction became obvious a few weeks ago.

Worries down by the bay

Deb Self, executive director of the environmental group Baykeeper, said whether the structure is a store or a data centre powered by wave action, there are going to be grave concerns.

- "We don't really want to see the bay used as a shopping mall. Unacceptable," she said.

The Internet giant's actions at Treasure Island appear legal, but the mystery surrounding the bulky floating building — and a similar one off Portland, Maine — is generating rumours and worries.

Privacy experts, environmentalists and legal authorities say that whether it is a store to sell Google's Internet-connected glasses, a data-storage centre or something else, the secrecy may backfire because Silicon Valley residents are highly protective of one of the most scenic and environmentally sensitive bays in the U.S.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

A barge under construction is docked at a pier at Treasure Island.
JUSTIN SULLIVAN/GETTY IMAGES

Random biz fact of the day

250

250 CVs are received on average for each job position.
BEHIRING/NEXCAREER

JUSTIN SULLIVAN/GETTY IMAGES

Market Minute

DOLLAR 95.62¢ (-0.37¢)
TSX 13,361.78 (no change)
OIL $93.37 US (-$1.25)
GOLD $1,308.10 US (-$6.60)

Natural gas: $3.48 US (no change)
Dow Jones: 15,618.22 (-20.90)

Imitation of burger

Which 'wich to go with? The Big Mac or the Big King?

What has two all-beef patties, special sauce, lettuce, cheese, pickles and onions on a sesame-seed bun? Burger King's latest sandwich.

The chain is bringing back its "Big King," which looks a lot like the Big Mac made by rival McDonald's. Burger King says it will be on the permanent menu rolling out this week.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Botulism concerns

Hotdog relish sold at market recalled

A hotdog relish has been recalled because of the potential presence of a bacterium that causes botulism.

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency says Orange Blossom Farm is recalling its unbranded relish because it may permit the growth of Clostridium botulinum.

The product was sold at the St. Jacob's Farmer's Market near Waterloo, Ont.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Meet Ms. Marvel: Kamala Khan

Marvel Comics is bringing Ms. Marvel back as a 16-year-old daughter of Pakistani immigrants living in Jersey City named Kamala Khan. The character is among the first to be a series protagonist who is both a woman and Muslim. She can grow and shrink, and is able to shape-shift into other forms.

MARVEL COMICS/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Douglas Coupland

Douglas Coupland's latest novel, Worst. Person. Ever., is available from Random House Canada.

Day 3

metronews.ca/temp

Pick your battles

Migrant workers raise a little hell on a Prairie farm

It didn't last, but a group of temporary, foreign farm workers at a small Prairie town were the first in Canada to accept a collective agreement.

The 14 workers, who travelled from Mexico to Portage la Prairie, Man. every summer to work picking crops like onions and broccoli, voted to ratify a three-year collective agreement through the United Food and Commercial Workers in the summer of 2008.

But a Supreme Court of Canada ruling in 2011 quashed the right of migrant workers in Canada to collectively bargain with their employers.

METRO IN WINNIPEG

Wage gap

An hour of your time for $5.44 less

So how do temps stack up to the rest of the work force when it comes to pay?

Well, there's a pretty stark difference.

Across Canada, temps earn, on average, $19.58 per hour — $5.44 less than permanent workers, according to Statistics Canada.

ANGELA MULLINS/METRO

Temp Enjoys Thursday Meal Special at Mister McFunbury's

Rarely have I ever felt so much like Sigourney Weaver at the end of an Alien movie. Around me nothing but casualties and disaster while I, Shannon the survivor, exit the doomed mothership to hop into a taxi to go on my glamorous date with a high-flying Asian businessman.

"Where to, Miss?"

"Mister McFunbury's."

"The one where they had the hostage taking last September?"

"No, the one by the off-ramp that takes you to the oil refineries."

"Right."

Mr. Xu (pronounced Mr. Shoe) was standing by the cigarette machine as I was told he would be. He wasn't hot, but he wasn't unhot, either — that's an important distinction. He was my age — late twenties, kind of Banana Republicky, and he was quite relaxed given the clattering of walkers stemming from "It's A Senior's Shrimpy Thursday!"

"I'm Shannon."

"I am Mr. Xu."

"Let's grab our seats."

We sat down, and my first instinct was to figure out Mr. Xu's language capacity. "How long have you been in the city?"

"Two very glorious nights."

"I'm glad they've been glorious. Is your hotel OK?"

"Most gracious hotel. Thank you."

Oh dear. I was going to be sitting with a fortune cookie all night. Well, OK. "Why don't we get into the McFunbury's spirit, Mr. Xu?"

"That would be most excellent."

I'm not totally proud of myself, but I went right for the booze — we hadn't even ordered food and I was trashing the three Sarahs. "My issue with Sarah No.1, Mr. Xu, is that on the first anniversary of Whitney Houston's death she Facebooked: "One year later, heaven took an angel from Earth too soon."

I'm not totally proud of myself, but I went right for the booze — we hadn't even ordered food and I was trashing the three Sarahs.

"Most unfortunate."

"I'll say. And my issue with Sarah No. 2 is that at a Friday staff lunch she suggested "we girls" go off on our own and have a "cuddle puddle" to discuss things "the boys just wouldn't understand."

"So sorry."

"And my issue with Sarah No. 3 — killer martinis, by the way — is that she insists on microwaving popcorn with that nauseating fake butter smell. She says, 'Well I think it smells like fun. If you don't like fun then I feel sorry for you'."

"Most ungracious."

I stared at the laminated menu. "What do you think you'll order, Mr. Xu?"

He then looked at me and said, "Well, I'm not feeling very surf-and-turfy — you know, it's a mood that you're either in, or you're not. And I kind of carbo-loaded at lunch — doing a half marathon in three weeks — so I guess I'll get a clubhouse with McFunbury Sauce on the side. You?"

"You, Mr. Xu, are a total dick."

"Let us both have one more most glorious martini. Clean or dirty?"

TO BE CONTINUED...

Random fact of the day

How cute is this?

- Sea otters hold hands when they sleep and eat in order to keep from drifting apart.

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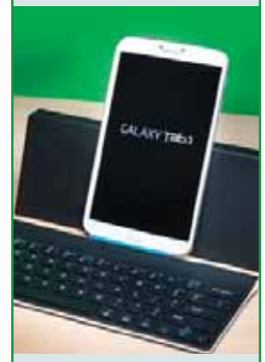

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JUST SAYIN'

Paul Sullivan
metronews.ca

They're at it again.

"They" of course, are those faceless, officious minions of Politically Correct Behaviour who are ruining all the fun.

Just when you think They can't get any more faceless or officious, They pull something like a ban on touching for little kids, with consequences for those five-year-olds who dare to hold hands.

Yes, you read that right. Kindergarten kids at Coghlan Fundamental School in a Vancouver suburb were told on Friday they couldn't touch each other, no way, no how.

No holding hands, hugging, pushing each other on the swing, playing tag or doing anything that involves contact.

And if you don't think They are serious, They sent this sternly worded memo to parents:

"We will have a zero-tolerance policy with regards to hands-on play, resulting in the missing of playtime and trips to the office for those who are unable to follow the rules."

"OK," says the principal to the kid, "what are you doing in my office?"

"I hugged Madison."

"That's pretty serious. That sort of thing could lead to tag or even, gasp, an outbreak of holding hands. No recess for you!"

Why? Why? Glad you asked. Because this kind of stuff (touching) is allegedly dangerous and has caused some injuries, maybe. No specifics because there is nothing real that could ever justify such a ridiculous ban.

They can't help themselves. A couple of years ago, a Toronto school banned all balls: soccer balls, basketballs, baseballs, footballs, volleyballs, everything except those foam Nerf balls. Try playing basketball with a Nerf ball.

The idea behind this nonsense appears to be: "Yeah, it's all fun until someone gets hurt." And, to be honest: "We realize this looks completely nuts but our lawyers told us to do it, and we do everything They tell us to do."

But really, can They ever go far enough? Sure, a ban on touching will discourage physical harm, but what about the mental anguish of my five-year-old? Sticks and stones will break my bones, but names will cause me to complain to the Human Rights Commission. Better issue a ban on talking.

What about breathing? Breathing causes the intake of particulate matter that can lead, later in life, to Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease. Better ban breathing.

Seriously, this is evidence of a massive failure of nerve at the adult level. Either that or there's a growing reluctance to kiss the boo-boo or wipe away the tears, at least without wearing rubber gloves. It's much easier to put the little gaffers in a hermetically sealed bubble and get back to the serious business of contract negotiations. Now about that sick leave ...

ZOOM

Are these up close or far away?

Answers, clockwise from top left corner: micro: wing of a Green Darner dragonfly; macro: desert region of Arabian Peninsula; micro: surface of a rotted human tooth; macro: dune patterns in the Erg Oriental, Algeria. PHOTOS COURTESY STEPHEN YOUNG AND PAUL KELLY

Photos test our perception of size

These pictures test our ability to tell apart the microscopic and macroscopic worlds.

Geographer Stephen Young and biologist Paul Kelly of Salem State University collected more than 50 such images for a joint exhibition at Salem and at Clark University in Worcester, Mass. METRO

Q and A

What an expert says

STEPHEN YOUNG
Professor of Geography, Salem State University, Mass.

How can I guess which is small or large-scale?
Age and education level do not seem to decide if people will get it right. School kids have been doing as well as college students and the general public. Professionals who have used electron microscopes or satellite imagery tend to do better, but even they misidentify some as well.

Best aspect of the project?
There is something deeply intriguing about trying to figure out at what scale the image is and then to be so surprised when it is the opposite. To think something is a millimetre and to find out that it is 1,000 kilometres is quite surprising.

Clickbait

ANDREW FIFIELD
andrew.fifield@metronews.ca

There's no shortage of apps and services that will allow you to stream music to your mobile device, but none get more use on my iPhone than SoundCloud. It's free, the selection is endless and just letting it play is the safest path to discovering something new. Try these accounts for great electronic music.

CONTRIBUTED

DFA Records:

Easily the reigning champ of the disco renaissance we've been hooked on for the past few years, the home of James Murphy and LCD Soundsystem also happens to be extremely generous with keeping their feed updated with new tracks. (soundcloud.com/dfa-records)

Future Classic:

Just as danceable as DFA's output, but with occasional forays into beachside guitar pop and bittersweet ballads. There are already hundreds of songs posted for you to work your way through. Get ready to favourite a chunk of them. (soundcloud.com/futureclassic)

Ninja Tune:

The London-based label is among your best bets for when you're in the mood for something a little on the strange side. It's cool, though. There's nothing threateningly interesting. Just endless creative restlessness. (soundcloud.com/ninja-tune)

Twitter

@metropicks asked: So now Rob Ford has admitted smoking crack, tell Metro what you've done #inoneofmydrunkenstupors

@necksbest: I may have listened to Justin Bieber #InOneOfMyDrunkenStupors. But I don't follow him and I'm not an addict

@jmmelanson: ran for mayor of Toronto and won accidentally #InOneOfMyDrunkenStupors

@Jdubs12: #InOneOfMyDrunkenStupors I drank some coke, a cola.

@katangus: #InOneOfMyDrunkenStupors I ordered both the paperback and Kindle editions of 50 Shades of Grey.

@JGregRandall: I was in Seattle last year and did not visit the Space Needle. What was I thinking? #drunkenstupor

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It's no Baby Sitter's Club, but Thor will do, I guess

Natalie Portman.
The star talks about her obsession with a certain book series and working with legend Anthony Hopkins

RICHARD CROUSE
scene@metronews.ca

Natalie Portman stars in Thor: The Dark World, which opens this weekend.
ALL PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

Despite starring in two movies based on a Marvel hero Natalie Portman says, "I've never gotten into comic books."

This weekend she reprises the role of Jane Foster, scientist and love interest to the God of Thunder in Thor: The Dark World.

Portman may not have spent time reading comics but she can understand the obsession fans have with Thor's characters because she was once a fan girl herself.

"The one thing I ever got into, like, that is really dorky," she says, "until I was 12 or 13 I was obsessed with the Babysitter's Club, a series of books for girls. There was a new book every month and the day the book would come out I had to go to the bookstore and get it and read it on the way home.

"The writer's name was Ann M. Martin and my friends and I would look in the phone book and call every Ann Martin trying to get her.

"One time she came to our bookstore and did a signing. The week before I wrote a packet about what her next book should be about, with drawings, and I waited in line for three hours and gave it to her and she was like, 'OK weirdo.'"

Playing heroine Jane Foster is miles away from her Academy Award winning role in the dark psychological drama Black Swan.

Portman admits she "never thought I'd get the chance" to act in a superhero movie, "which is why whenever they ask I say yes."

Also appealing is the chance to work with Anthony Hopkins, who she describes as "a giant among actors."

She shares several scenes with the veteran actor and says she was "completely intimidated" by him.

"I kept messing up lines around him because I was so nervous but he was so sweet about it. He'd say, 'That's a really hard line to say.'"

Many of her scenes with Hopkins take place on Asgard, the celestial planetoid home to Thor and his family, which raises the question, does Portman believe there is life on other planets?

"That question makes me think of another movie. In Antz all the insects are around a campfire," she says, laughing, "and they say, 'Do you think there's something bigger than us out there?'

"It totally feels like that. Of course there has to be something else out there. I don't know what it is but it would be completely silly to think that we're 'it.'"

Analysis

What's behind the hammer?

IN FOCUS
Richard Crouse
scene@metronews.ca

It's hammer time at the movies this weekend.

Thor: The Dark World opens in theatres, bringing with it Chris Hemsworth as the sledgehammer wielding superhero with his rippling muscles, crazy mythology and Dark Elves.

The Marvel comic series borrowed the character from Norse mythology, co-opting the God Of Thunder's most famous weapon, the Mjölnir. In myth the name translates to "that which smashes," and refers to his hammer, a fearsome club capable of levelling mountains, causing lightning flashes and boomeranging back when he throws it.

"The power within Mjölnir," he says, "doth rage like the winter storms bursting upon the shore in furious assault!"

According to Nordic legend the mallet was forged by dwarven brothers Sindri and Brokkr but Marvel embroidered the lore, adding to the story the fictional Asgardian metal uru as the main component of the basher and an inscription that reads, "Whosoever holds this hammer, if he be worthy, shall possess the power of Thor."

Thor: the man, the myth, the legend.

The image of Thor flying through the air, propelled by Mjölnir, is the iconic picture from the comics and movies, but not from mythology.

According to legend, Thor's preferred mode of transport was a chariot drawn by two 1,700-pound warrior goats named Toothgnasher and Toothgrinder.

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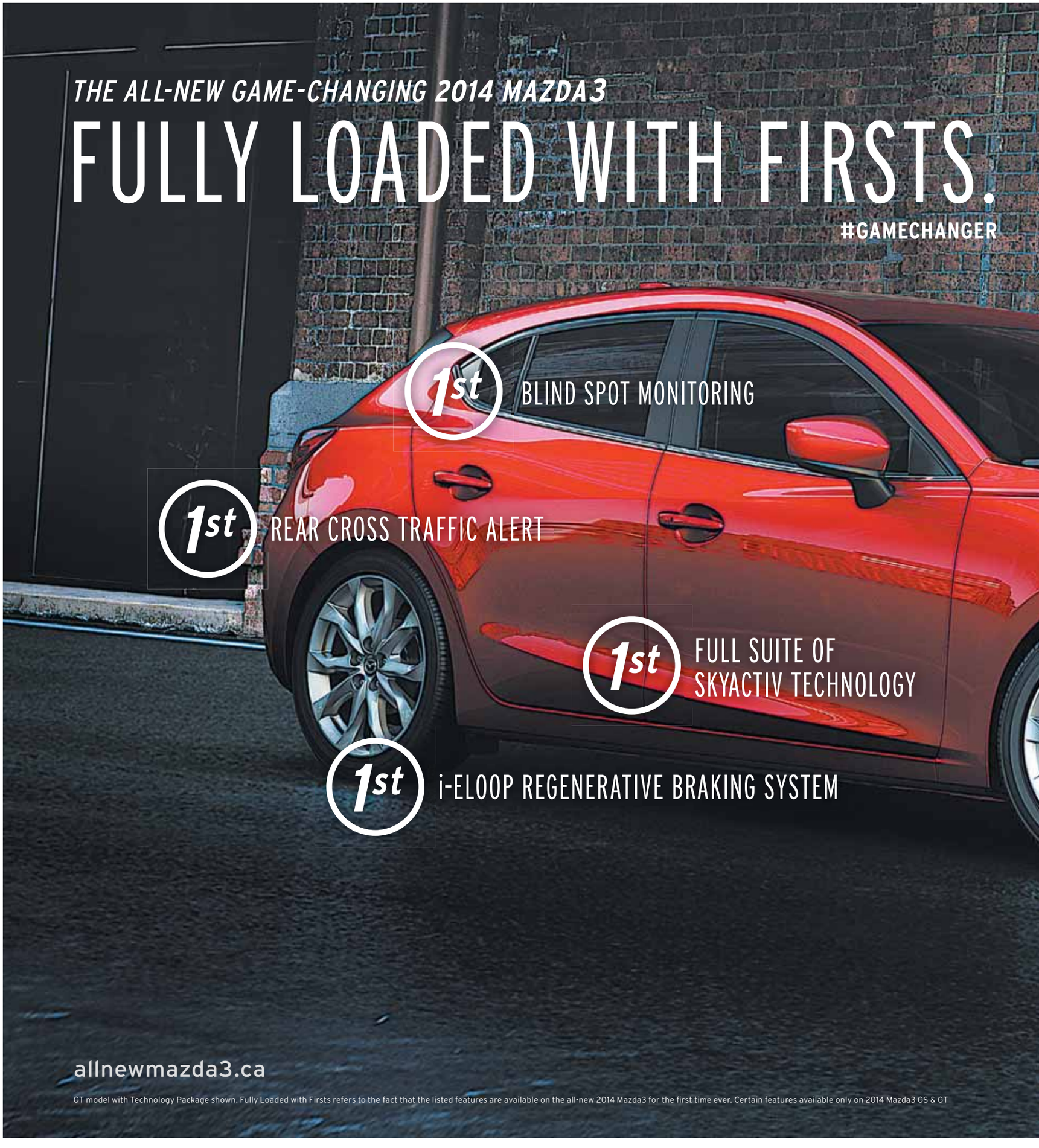
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OUR TAKE ON THE WORLD OF CELEBRITIES

The Word

No, it's just a gentleman's club, guys... with bed sheets

So apparently that Brazilian brothel Justin Bieber hung out at over the weekend wasn't exactly a brothel per se, according to some sources that are trying to help salvage the 19-year-old pop star's reputation.

Centauros is more like "an old-fashioned gentleman's club," a source tells E! News. "For what it is, it is high end and it's not cheap to get in there. There is an entrance fee. Playboy-types go there and local businessmen and tourists."

Of course, that doesn't quite explain why the establishment would have bed sheets bearing its logo on hand — one of which Bieber hid under as he was rushed out of the building.

And as for the two women from the club who left with Bieber?

"The girls that work there — some have clothes on and some kind of don't," the source explains. "They are all in there to make money. They don't work for the club."

Miley Cyrus

Miley Cyrus mocks In Touch magazine

Miley Cyrus is clearly taking all the tabloid attention she's been receiving in stride. In Touch magazine published an extensive cover story on the singer with a giant headline, "Miley finally admits: I need help!"

So what was Cyrus' response? She made the magazine cover her profile picture on Twitter.

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The lost link to golf heaven

Bermuda. Island's plethora of renowned courses attract players from around the world

BRIAN KENDALL
canadiangolftraveller.com

Port Royal's signature 16th hole is a par three clinging to a cliff high above Whale Bay. PHOTOS: MARKETING BERMUDA

Bermuda is renowned for its pink sand beaches, turquoise waters and refined atmosphere. Just as unforgettable are Mid Ocean, Port Royal and the other golf courses on an island of almost celestial beauty.

"You go to heaven if you want to," Mark Twain famously said of Bermuda. "I'd rather stay here."

Founded in 1609 by survivors of a British shipwreck, Bermuda has long enjoyed a reputation as one of the most beautiful places on Earth. Sailboats and luxury yachts dot the harbour at Hamilton, the bustling capital, where colonial-style houses topped by stepped roofs to collect rainwater are painted in a palette of pastel colours. Oleander, frangipani, bougainvillea and hibiscus scent the warm breezes of the Gulf Stream.

High season in Bermuda, located roughly 1,000 kilometres east of the North Carolina coastline, runs from April through October. But many Canadians visit during the sub-tropical island's more temperate winter months, when daytime highs average just below 20 C, room rates are reduced, and tee times at top courses are readily available.

Though just 54 square kilometres in size, Bermuda is remarkably rich in world-class golf courses. The sport has been a major tourist draw since the early 1920s, when Riddell's Bay Golf and Country Club opened on a narrow peninsula thrusting into the turquoise waters of the Great Sound. The tight fairways and small greens of architect Devereux Emmet's 5,713-yard layout offer ample challenge, especially when winds gust off the Atlantic.

A few kilometres north of Riddell's Bay is Mid Ocean Club, a superb Charles Blair Macdonald design that has symbolized Bermuda golf since opening shortly after the launch of Riddell's Bay.

Mid Ocean is where Bermuda's elite take their divots. Billionaire Ross Perot and New York's Michael Bloomberg own houses in the rolling hills overlooking the golf course. Another member, movie star Michael Douglas, became a local hero in the aftermath of hurricane Fabian in 2003 when he used his private jet to deliver chain saws and generators, then stayed for a week to help in the cleanup.

Remodelled with good judgment by the great Robert Trent Jones Sr. in 1953, Mid Ocean offers risk-and-reward golf at its best as it winds 6,520 yards through rolling inland countryside before ending dramatically with a par four that skirts the bluffs overlooking the sea.

At Mid Ocean's daunting 433-yard par-four fifth, where the fairway bends around a lake that is widest on the direct line to the green, Babe Ruth once put a dozen balls in the water before hitting a home run.

Two other popular and challenging layouts are Tucker's Point Club, a hilly Roger Rulewich redesign that is the centrepiece of a posh resort community featuring Tucker's Point Hotel and Spa; and Belmont Hills Golf Course, a remodelled 6,017-yard layout offering panoramic vistas of the Great Sound and Hamilton Harbour. Bermuda even boasts one of the world's top-ranked par-three courses, Turtle Hill Golf Club, an 18-hole, 2,962-yard beauty on the grounds of Bermuda's largest hotel, the towering pink 593-room Fairmont Southampton.

But the buzz these days is about the rejuvenated Port Royal Golf Course, which every October since 2009 has hosted the PGA Grand Slam of Golf, a made-for-TV exhibition featuring the winners of the year's four major championships.

Built in the 1960s by Trent Jones Sr. atop oceanside cliffs on the south shore, the government-owned course received a brilliant $15-million revamp several years ago by Rulewich, who worked with Jones during the original construction.

Especially unforgettable is Port Royal's signature 16th, a staggeringly gorgeous wind-blown par three clinging to a cliff high above Whale Bay that stretches to a heroic length of 235 yards from the back tee.

Twain had it right. With golf holes like that, heaven can wait.

After golf

- **Beaches.** Bermuda is renowned for its secluded and pristine pink sand beaches. Three of the best: Whale Bay, Astwood Cove and Jobson's Cove.
- **Snorkelling.** There are roughly 300 shipwrecks to explore in warm and clear waters offering reefs, underwater caves and a variety of marine life.

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Disney gets decadent in Hawaii

Aulani. With spas, cultural activities and plenty to keep the kids occupied, this is a dream spot for families

MAE BOWRING
life@metronews.ca

Is there a better place to take a nap than on a lounge chair by the ocean in Hawaii? CONTRIBUTED

Sunsets that'll make you speechless and postcard-worthy palm trees await at Aulani: A Disney Resort & Spa, on the western shore of O'ahu. Open for two years, the Disney property recently underwent an expansion to keep up with the flood of tourists. But this isn't the Disney resort you know. It's luxury meets the beach and when you add a sprinkle of pixie dust, Aulani is a Canadian family's dream destination. Here are the top five things to see and do.

Find humuhumu

Get ready to see each colour of the rainbow and every shade in-between when you snorkel the Rainbow Reef. Hundreds of curious tropical fish will swim by your mask to show off their beauty and if you're lucky, you'll get a glimpse of the reef's one and only humuhumu nukunuku apua'a. Hawaii's state fish, it looks like it's wearing bright blue lipstick and eye shadow.

Take a walk back in time

History and culture come to life through song and dance at the Starlit Hui. Uncle, what Hawaiians call an elder man out of respect, shares folklore while families make traditional crafts and learn how to hula under the stars. Uncle reveals tales of the mythical Menehune over a campfire as well. They are said to help the good and play tricks on the bad, so tourists are reminded to always be on their best behaviour.

Freshwater heaven detox

Being rubbed with hot rocks and sticks wouldn't normally appeal, but the lomilomi massage at the co-ed Laniwai Spa erases all real-life stress. Guests can also indulge in the outdoor water therapies of plunge pools and rainfall showers or snooze on a lounge chair amongst lush vegetation and blossoming flowers native to Hawaii. It's easy to quiet the mind when you can't hear anything at all.

Aulani's non-stop fun

Everyone squeals a little racing down the mountaintop water slide. But after the big splash comes the best part — a tube ride down the lazy river — which boasts the best view of the resort. Beach yoga or boot camp is a great way to work off all those mai tais and if the cerulean beach water doesn't call your name, the gorgeous infinity pools will. Want to make your own volcano and then blow it up? Sorry, that's only for kids during day programming at Aunty's Beach House.

Head for the North Shore

Hawaiian cuisine, sport and wildlife can be found on O'ahu's North Shore. An hour's drive from Aulani, you'll see fearless surfers catching waves and giant sea turtles coming ashore for a rest on Laniakea Beach. Bring your appetite, because the garlic shrimp at Giovanni's food truck, the Baja corn at Uncle Woody's and the rainbow shave ice from Matsumoto's are must-trys. Open for more than 60 years and made popular by surfers, the lineup for shave ice may extend down the street, but it's worth the wait.

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Adventuring

Tips for your own epic global trek

ON THE MOVE
Loren Christie
life@metronews.ca

An around-the-world trip is something many of us dream of but the thought of planning it can be daunting.

The first step is acknowledging that it will be a lot of work. You're not just planning one holiday, you're planning 12 or 15 or 20 back to back and dealing with numerous flights, hotels, airport transfers, different currencies, languages and time zones.

You should count on being away for at least a couple of months and once you hit the road it's imperative to leave time every few days to stay on top of — and make changes to — your schedule.

Plan an itinerary that ensures you visit the spots you have always dreamed of seeing: the Great Wall of China, the Taj Mahal or the Great Barrier Reef.

However, make sure to leave room for some spontaneity in your trip. Once you're on the road, the reality of travelling could have you feeling differently about places.

Book holidays within the holiday. You'll need to give yourself a rest every now and then. Don't feel bad that you're not exploring some hidden temple or touring a museum. Sometimes you just need to plant yourself in a beach chair with a drink in hand.

The more obscure the places you want to hit, the more expensive your ticket will likely be. Stopping in major hub cities like London, Sydney and Bangkok will keep the price of your plane ticket down. Purchase your ticket with an airline that is part of a larger alliance, like Air Canada and Star Alliance, which gives you the option to fly on more than 25 airlines as part of your ticket. Remember that round-the-world plane tickets will keep you moving from east to west or vice-versa; you can't go backwards.

Pack light, but also pack what you like to wear. You're going to be wearing the same clothes again and again, through countless layovers, different climates and a variety of cultures. While shopping may be enticing, lugging around what you buy for weeks or months will quickly become cumbersome.

Don't be afraid to go alone. My friend @MSiddiqi is currently on month six of a solo trip and loving it. If you are travelling by yourself you will meet other people easier than if you were travelling with a companion. The opportunity to move at your own pace is an added bonus of travelling alone.

A round the world trip can be a costly, time-consuming endeavour, but the rewards are priceless.

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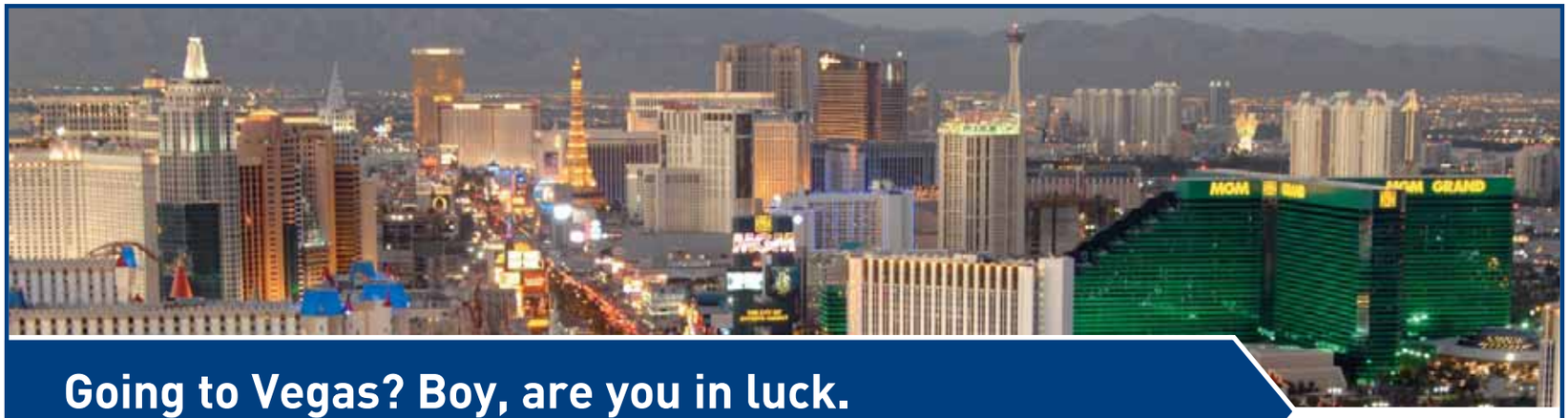

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Drink of the Week

The Perfect Martini

- 2 oz Luksusowa Vodka
- 1/4 to 1/2 oz dry vermouth
- Crushed ice
- Olive, onion or a lemon twist

Tools

- Stainless steel shaker or glass pitcher with spoon and strainer
- Atomizer
- Martini or rock glass
- Condiment pick or zester (depending on selected garnish)

Use chilled martini or rock glass. Sparingly atomize inside of glass with the dry vermouth (less vermouth equals a martini that is more dry).

Gently shake or stir Luksusowa Vodka with crushed ice in stainless steel shaker or glass pitcher.

Immediately pour (straining out ice) into glass. Garnish with olive, onion or a lemon twist. COURTESY LUKSUSOWA

Move over pumpkins, it's orange's time to shine

ROSE REISMAN
For more, visit rosereisman.com or follow her on twitter @rosereisman

If you love pound cakes but don't want to add on the pounds, this is a perfect dessert or snack in the afternoon. The cream cheese gives the cake a creamy and buttery texture without the calories and the fat. For the record, each serving contains 214 calories and 7.6 grams of fat.

1. Preheat oven to 350 F. Spray a 9- X 5-inch loaf pan with cooking spray.

2. To make cake: In a food processor or in a large bowl and using an electric mixer, beat eggs, sugar, orange juice, oil, cream cheese, orange rind, and poppy seeds until smooth. In another bowl, stir together flour, baking powder, and baking soda; into cream cheese mixture, alternately stir flour mixture and sour cream, making three additions of each. Pour into prepared pan.

3. Bake in the centre of oven for 45 to 50 minutes or until a tester inserted in centre of cake comes out clean. Remove from pan and cool completely on a wire rack.

4. To make icing: In a food processor or in a bowl and using an electric mixer, beat all icing ingredients together. Spread over top of cake. Garnish with poppy seeds and/or orange rind.

This recipe serves 12. ROSE REISMAN

Ingredients

Cake
- 2 eggs
- 1 1/4 cups granulated sugar
- 1/4 cup orange juice
- 1/4 cup vegetable oil
- 2 oz light cream cheese, softened
- 1 tbsp grated orange rind
- 1 tbsp poppy seeds
- 1 2/3 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 1/2 tsp baking powder
- 1/2 tsp baking soda
- 2/3 cup low-fat sour cream

Icing
- 1 oz light cream cheese, softened
- 1/2 cup icing sugar
- 1 tbsp fresh orange juice

Garnish
- Poppy seeds and/or grated orange rind

Dessert. Mango Cheesecake

Sweet, tropical mango flavours healthy enough for an everyday indulgence? It's possible with this unique take on the classic cheesecake recipe.

1. Heat oven to 300 F (150 C). Line bottom of 9-inch (23 cm) spring form pan with parchment paper or spray with non-stick cooking spray.

2. Combine crust ingredients and press into spring form pan. Bake 10 mins. Cool on rack.

3. In medium bowl, beat cream cheese and sugar on medium speed until light and fluffy, about 5 minutes. Add yogurt and flour and beat until smooth.

4. Add eggs one at a time and beat on low until blended.

5. Fold in mashed mango. Pour cheesecake into prepared pan.

6. Bake 1 hour or until centre is slightly jiggly. Turn off oven; let cool in oven 20 minutes with door closed. Remove from oven; run knife around side of pan to loosen. Cool on wire rack 2 hours. Cover; refrigerate 4 hours. Remove sides of pan.

7. Garnish with chopped mango. COURTESY YOPLAIT CANADA

Ingredients

Crust
- 1 cup (250 ml) graham cracker crumbs
- 2 tbsp (30 ml) butter, melted

Filling
- 2 pkgs (250 g each) light cream cheese, softened
- 1/2 cup (125 ml) granulated sugar
- 6 x 100 ml containers (about 2 cups/500 ml) Yoplait Yopa! Greek Yogurt – Mmmm Mango Tango
- 3 tbsp (45 ml) all-purpose flour
- 3 eggs
- 1 cup (250 ml) fmashed mango
- Additional chopped mango for garnish

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Tales of Twitter gone terribly awry

Watch what you web. Can you be formally disciplined by your employer for your tweets, comments and postings? History tells us, yes.

PARISA NIKFARJAM
TalentEgg.ca

If you don't "like" the idea of being let go, then be careful what you cast out into the social sphere. ISTOCK

The social media world has become more expansive, and more a part of our everyday routine, so it should be no wonder that it has seeped into our working life as well.

Social media can be a great platform for self or company promotion (think how vast your reach is on LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook), but at the same time, it can spell demotions, suspensions and terminations.

A perusal of the news is a testament of the career-damaging potential of social media.

Real world examples

Ontario Hockey League

Take for example Joe Monette, an Ontario Hockey League referee, who was suspended for his online posts.

After officiating a game in Sault Ste Marie, Monette took to Twitter and tweeted the following: "Soo Saint Mari, two words, Slim Pickens. #noteeth #hicktown #allfaties."

Not surprisingly, the residents of Sault Ste Marie did not appreciate the comment, and uproar quickly ensued.

In an attempt to quell the upset caused by his tweet, Monette subsequently tweeted: "My tweet last night was not meant to be offensive and was meant as a joke between myself and a buddy of mine that lives in the Soo. I apologize if I offended anybody."

The OHL was not satisfied with Monette's blanket apology, and suspended him for the rest of the season and playoffs.

Kent Police

Just outside of a city of London (this time in England), a teen named Paris Brown, who had recently been appointed the first youth police and crime commissioner for Kent, faced similar outrage when her tweets were published in the local newspaper.

In that regard, Brown's tweets bragged about her drinking and drug use, criticized the local pizzeria employees for not speaking "proper English" and included various racist and homophobic comments.

While members of the British Parliament called for Brown's resignation, Brown defended herself by stating that the tweets were taken out of context and that she was "wildly exaggerating" on Twitter.

Despite Kent Police and Crime Commissioner Ann Barnes' supportive statement that Brown's tweets were not unlike the posts of many other teenagers on social media, Brown ultimately resigned.

These recent examples seem to contradict the conventional wisdom that what employees do on their own time is their own business.

Regardless of whether or not an employee's online comments/conduct rises to the level of "just cause" for termination without notice and severance, it remains an employer's prerogative to proceed with a "not for cause" dismissal, and provide appropriate termination arrangements.

In other words, an ill-advised social media post may cost you your job regardless of whether or not it represents "just cause."

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Employment-related misconduct

What has emerged from recent cases is that employers can take the position that an employee's off-site and off-duty conduct online will constitute employment-related misconduct if:

- The employee's conduct harms the employer's reputation.
- The employee's conduct makes the employee unable to perform his/her duties satisfactorily.
- The employee's conduct leads to refusal, reluctance or inability of the other employees to work with him/her (think blogs/posts criticizing coworkers!).
- The employee's conduct makes it difficult for the employer to properly carry out its function of managing its business and efficiently directing its workforce.

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Meet your first meeting head-on.
The three Ps of giving any new boardroom your personal best

MEGHAN GREAVES
TalentEgg.ca

One of the many new things you'll do when starting a new job is attend your very first meeting! Not a big deal, right?

Actually, good performance at meetings could make or break your career. Here's how to excel in your first meeting.

Have all of your materials prepared the day before to ensure you don't forget anything. ISTOCK

Prepare
This might seem obvious, but "prepare" doesn't mean showing up to the meeting ready to take pages of notes. Be ready to do that, but also think about getting enough sleep the night before. You need to avoid being drowsy half way through.

To maximize your staying power, pick an appropriate but comfortable outfit, eat at the right time so your tummy doesn't start grumbling and be well aware of the meeting's focus.

Be present
It's very important to show that you're both physically and mentally present during the meeting. Do this by:

• Listening and taking notes as necessary. Try to keep all of your questions until the end where there will likely be a question period. Your question might get answered in the meantime.

• Showing that you're interested. Even simply nodding your head when someone makes a good point or smiling at a creative idea shows that you're invested and interested in the meeting.

Participate
During your first meeting you likely won't need to say much (phew!). This doesn't mean you need to stay silent though.

By communicating professionally (i.e. get your thoughts together before you speak), you can answer questions when addressed or make comments when appropriate. Remember: This is your first meeting, you don't want to ramble on and make yourself look unprofessional.

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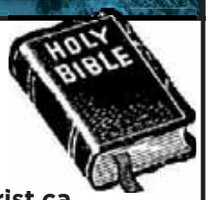

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The importance of being influential

My guru of greatness.
Three reasons to take a wandering business hopeful under your wing

Ask Kevin Schwenker about his experiences as a mentor and he'll likely have enough stories to convince any businessperson to free up some time to find a protegé or two.

Schwenker is a seven-year mentor with the Canadian Youth Business Foundation, a non-profit organization that provides youth aged 18 to 39 with start-up financing, pre-launch expertise, online business resources and mentoring to help them launch and sustain successful businesses.

As a mentor, your skills, experience and knowledge can play a key role in helping a future mogul get their business off the ground and turn their dream into a reality.

Advising an up-and-coming entrepreneur can do just as much for your career as it can for someone's future success. ISTOCK

"It doesn't take a lot of time to make a huge difference in helping a young entrepreneur become successful," Schwenker says. Need more incentive? Here are some reasons you should consider taking on a mentee:

Pay it forward
Maybe your mentor was a kind professor who coached you before you landed your first job.

Perhaps it was a manager who took you under their wing. There's at least one person who played a role in shaping the businessperson you are today.

As a mentor, you can help mold the next generation, which means you can:

Influence the future of Canadian business
"I've always believed that providing a powerful vision of the future is the most important legacy we can give to our youth; supporting self-sufficiency via mentoring is a powerful influence one can have on the future," says Schwenker.

NEWS CANADA

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Decision looms: Pierce or Lulay?

CFL. Lions have yet to name their starting quarterback for Sunday's West semifinal vs. Riders

CAM TUCKER
cam.tucker@metronews.ca

Lions quarterbacks Travis Lulay and Buck Pierce look on during Friday's game against the Stampeders at BC Place Stadium. It has not been decided which quarterback will start in the West semifinal. DARRYL DYCK/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Eeny, meeny, miny, moe, who will be the B.C. Lions' starting quarterback Sunday against the Saskatchewan Roughriders? We don't yet know.

The choice, as of Tuesday afternoon, remains between Travis Lulay, the incumbent who has missed six of the last seven games with an injured throwing shoulder, and Buck Pierce, a nine-year veteran reacquired by B.C. in a September trade with Winnipeg.

Both Lulay and Pierce took reps with the first-team offence as the Lions hit the field at BC Place Stadium for practice on Tuesday.

The Lions travel to Regina on Saturday, in advance of their West semifinal showdown with the Roughriders in the hostile confines of Mosaic Stadium.

"Obviously he has to feel good throughout the week," Lions head coach Mike Benevides said of Lulay.

"He's got to make sure that he continues to get stronger, feels good about the game plan and doesn't have any setbacks. With Buck, he's done an outstanding job the last two games and I think he gives us a great opportunity."

Lulay played three offensive series in Friday's win over the Calgary Stampeders in the regular-season finale. It was his first game action since suffering an injury to his right shoulder on Sept. 15.

As the Lions returned for practice following the weekend and Monday off, Lulay was able to air the ball out for more distance and zip on his passes.

He was later asked if he was ready to start against the Roughriders.

"I believe so. I'm going to prepare that way," said Lulay, who completed three of four pass attempts and ran for a touchdown in the win over Calgary.

Benevides admitted the possibility both Pierce and Lulay could factor into the Lions offence against the Roughriders.

"Certainly, we're preparing both of them as if they're starting."

NHL

Canucks fall in shootout to hot Desert Dogs

Antoine Vermette scored the deciding goal in the shootout for the second straight game and the Phoenix Coyotes won their fifth in a row, 3-2 over the Vancouver Canucks on Tuesday night.

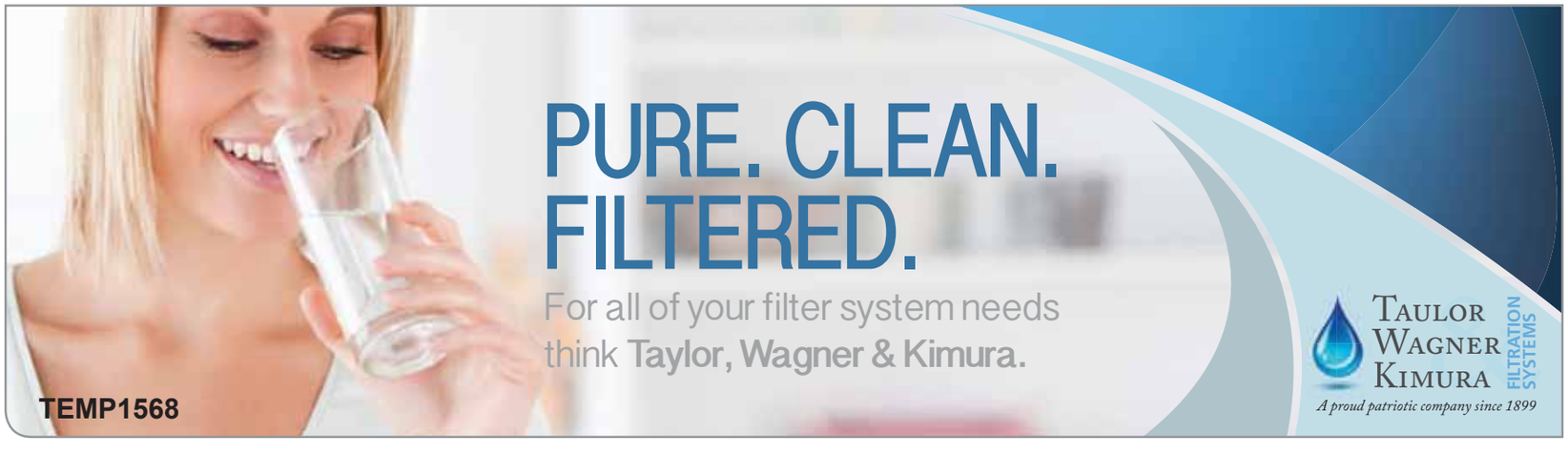
Vermette, who gave the Coyotes a victory at San Jose on Saturday, trickled the puck just past the line in the sixth round of this tiebreaker. Henrik Sedin lost control of the puck on his chance after Vermette's goal, and the Coyotes skated off with their third consecutive shootout win.

Radim Vrbata and Shane Doan scored in regulation for the Coyotes, 7-0-1 at home. Dan Hamhuis and Ryan Kesler had goals for Vancouver.

Vrbata had the other shootout goal for Phoenix. Alex Burrows was the only one to score in the tiebreaker for the Canucks.

Mike Smith, who had 48 saves at San Jose, made 31 against Vancouver. Roberto Luongo stopped 30 shots. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Coyotes goaltender Mike Smith celebrates after stopping the Canucks' Henrik Sedin in a shootout. GETTY IMAGES



Steve Smith of Nanaimo rides down the mountain bike trail at the 2013 World Cup final in Leogang, Austria, in September. SVEN MARTIN/CYCLES DEVINCI

Family support takes B.C.'s Smith to top of the world

Mountain biking. World champion from Nanaimo started with humble beginnings

CAM TUCKER
cam.tucker@metronews.ca

Steve Smith once asked himself the question: Can I make a living off competing in downhill mountain biking?

The message was simple: Canadians haven't really excelled at this discipline in the past.

Then Smith, who hails from Nanaimo, won the 2013 World Cup thanks to three first-place finishes in the final three races of the season, including the final in Leogang, Austria on Sept. 22.

"To be … on top of the world is more than a dream come true," said Smith, 23, in a recent interview with Metro.

Smith needed to the race of his life in Leogang to clinch the title, and that's exactly what happened. Having qualified in the top spot, and as the last rider in the final run, flew down the course.

The story now isn't that he won the World Cup. It's about how, and what events led him to that moment.

The World Cup win is the grand achievement for a man who enjoys the rush of riding down a mountain, over and over again, as his mother, Tiann Smith, can attest.

For the past seven years, Smith has been riding Mt. Prevost in Duncan. He calls it some of the best riding in the world.

His mother, a single parent, would drive him up to the top of the hill so he could race down, and then drive him right back up.

When Smith was five years old, his grandmother traded Realm Bikes a dozen apple pies for a used BMX bike.

"You don't realize those things when you're younger and as you age and listen to the stories, it's really amazing that they've put all that effort into helping me," said Smith.

He began racing BMX, before making the switch to mountain biking.

At first, it was supposed to be for recreation. But the racer in him re-appeared, right around the age of 14.

It's literally been downhill from there.

"Every year, I just want to be better and better," he said.

Olympics

Canada sets up phone line to crack down on doping

With the Sochi Winter Olympics fast approaching, overseers of Canada's elite athletes are hoping to avoid a post-podium national embarrassment.

In an effort to catch cheaters, the Canadian Centre for Ethics in Sport launched an anonymous snitch line Tuesday where athletes and others connected to sport can report allegations of doping.

Canadians want every effort to be made to prevent an embarrassing spectacle in Sochi, centre president and CEO Paul Melia said.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

NBA

Heat stars prove too much for Raps

LeBron James poured in a season-high 35 points, while Dwyane Wade added 20 to propel the Miami Heat to a 104-95 win over the Raptors on Tuesday, marking Miami's 12th consecutive victory over Toronto.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Hockey. For Wickenheiser, it's rest for the reluctant

Hayley Wickenheiser wishes she was playing in the Four Nations Cup this week, but says she accepts the decision by coaches to leave her off the Canadian women's hockey roster along with five other players.

Canada's all-time leading scorer and captain for all major tournaments since 2007 was one of six players who didn't make the trip to Lake Placid, N.Y., for the annual international women's hockey tournament featuring Canada, the U.S., Sweden and Finland.

Canadian head coach Dan Church said the move was made to give the 35-year-old Wickenheiser and other veteran players a rest.

Assistant captain and three-time Olympian Caroline Ouellette and forward Marie-Philip Poulin, as well as defencemen Meaghan Mikkelson, Lauriane Rougeau and Laura Fortino were the others who remained in Calgary.

Poulin, who is recovering from an ankle injury, and Mikkelson were members of the team that won an Olympic gold medal in 2010.

Canada has 27 women based in Calgary trying out for the 2014 Olympic team expected to be named in late December.

Hayley Wickenheiser
THE CANADIAN PRESS FILE

Three forwards and three defencemen will be released.

Wickenheiser has played in 14 Nations Cups during her career. Canada opened the tournament Tuesday against Finland and faces the host U.S. on Wednesday. The final is Saturday.

"You want to go, so it's disappointing," Wickenheiser said Tuesday. "They have their plan and their reasons for doing things, so you have to accept the decision, I guess.

"It's hard. You want to be there. But keep in mind the big picture and what we're trying to accomplish in February."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

NHL

EASTERN CONFERENCE

ATLANTIC DIVISION

	GP	W	L	OL	GF	GA	Pt
Tampa Bay	14	10	4	0	47	35	20
Toronto	15	10	5	0	48	36	20
Detroit	16	9	5	2	40	41	20
Boston	14	8	5	1	38	28	17
Montreal	16	8	7	1	43	34	17
Ottawa	15	5	6	4	46	48	14
Florida	15	3	8	4	31	53	10
Buffalo	16	2	13	1	26	49	5

METROPOLITAN DIVISION

	GP	W	L	OL	GF	GA	Pt
Pittsburgh	15	11	4	0	48	33	22
Washington	15	8	7	0	50	42	16
NY Islanders	15	6	6	3	47	50	15
Carolina	15	5	7	3	29	45	13
NY Rangers	14	6	8	0	26	40	12
Columbus	14	5	9	0	34	40	10
New Jersey	14	3	7	4	26	42	10
Philadelphia	14	4	9	1	22	39	9

Tuesday's results
Dallas 3 Boston 2 (SO)
Ottawa 4 Columbus 1
Washington 6 NY Islanders 2
Edmonton 4 Florida 3 (OT)
St. Louis 3 Montreal 2 (SO)
Carolina 2 Philadelphia 1 (OT)
Minnesota 5 Calgary 1
Phoenix 3 Vancouver 2 (SO)
Buffalo at San Jose

WESTERN CONFERENCE

CENTRAL DIVISION

	GP	W	L	OL	GF	GA	Pt
Colorado	13	12	1	0	42	19	24
Chicago	15	9	2	4	52	42	22
Minnesota	16	9	4	3	43	35	21
St. Louis	13	9	2	2	47	31	20
Nashville	14	7	5	2	31	40	16
Dallas	15	7	6	2	40	44	16
Winnipeg	16	6	8	2	39	47	14

PACIFIC DIVISION

	GP	W	L	OL	GF	GA	Pt
Anaheim	16	12	3	1	52	40	25
Phoenix	16	11	3	2	54	48	24
San Jose	14	10	1	3	53	27	23
Vancouver	17	10	5	2	48	44	22
Los Angeles	15	9	6	0	43	40	18
Calgary	15	6	7	2	43	54	14
Edmonton	16	4	10	2	40	62	10

Note: Two points for a win, one point for overtime loss.

Monday's results
Anaheim 2 NY Rangers 1
Winnipeg 4 Detroit 2
Sunday's results
Dallas 4 Ottawa 3 (SO)
Calgary 3 Chicago 2 (OT)
Minnesota 4 New Jersey 0
Wednesday's games — All Times Eastern
Pittsburgh at NY Rangers, 7:30 p.m.
Winnipeg at Chicago, 8 p.m.
Nashville at Colorado, 9:30 p.m.
Phoenix at Anaheim, 10 p.m.

MLS PLAYOFFS

CONFERENCE SEMIFINALS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

NEW YORK VS. HOUSTON

Sunday's result
Leg 1 — New York 2 Houston 2
Wednesday's game — All Times Eastern
Leg 2 — Houston at New York, 8 p.m.

SPORTING KC VS. NEW ENGLAND

Saturday's result
Leg 1 — New England 2 Sporting KC 1
Wednesday's game
Leg 2 — New England at Sporting KC, 9 p.m.

WESTERN CONFERENCE

PORTLAND VS. SEATTLE

Saturday's result
Leg 1 — Portland 2 Seattle 1
Thursday's game
Leg 2 — Seattle at Portland, 11 p.m.

REAL SALT LAKE VS. LA GALAXY

Sunday's result
Leg 1 — LA Galaxy 1 Real Salt Lake 0
Thursday's game
Leg 2 — LA Galaxy at Real Salt Lake, 9 p.m.

NBA

EASTERN CONFERENCE

	W	L	Pct	GB
Indiana	4	0	1.000	—
Philadelphia	3	1	.750	1
Miami	3	2	.600	1½
Toronto	2	2	.500	2
Charlotte	2	2	.500	2
Orlando	2	2	.500	2
Cleveland	2	2	.500	2
Detroit	2	2	.500	2
Brooklyn	2	2	.500	2
Chicago	1	2	.333	2½
Atlanta	1	2	.333	2½
Milwaukee	1	2	.333	2½
New York	1	3	.250	3
Washington	0	3	.000	3½
Boston	0	4	.000	4

WESTERN CONFERENCE

	W	L	Pct	GB
L.A. Clippers	3	1	.750	—
Houston	3	1	.750	—
Phoenix	3	1	.750	—
Minnesota	3	1	.750	—
Golden State	3	1	.750	—
San Antonio	3	1	.750	—
Dallas	3	1	.750	—
Oklahoma City	2	1	.667	1/2
Portland	2	1	.667	1/2
Memphis	2	2	.500	1
L.A. Lakers	2	3	.400	1½
Sacramento	1	2	.333	1½
New Orleans	1	3	.250	2
Denver	0	3	.000	2½
Utah	0	4	.000	3

Tuesday's results
Miami 104 Toronto 95
Brooklyn 104 Utah 88
Charlotte 102 New York 97
Indiana 99 Detroit 91
Phoenix 104 New Orleans 98
Dallas 123 L.A. Lakers 104
San Antonio 102 Denver 94
Atlanta at Sacramento
Houston at Portland

CFL PLAYOFFS

DIVISION SEMIFINALS

EAST DIVISION

Sunday's game — All Times Eastern
Montreal vs. Hamilton (at Guelph, Ont.), 1 p.m.

WEST DIVISION

Sunday's game
B.C. at Saskatchewan, 4:30 p.m.
Byes: Toronto (East), Calgary (West)

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2014 Ram EcoDiesel

ALL PHOTOS WHEELBASEMEDIA.COM

Review. That thing got a Hemi engine? Nope. Something better

MALCOLM GUNN
wheelbasemedia.com

As light-duty pickup trucks go, the upgraded-for-2013 Chrysler-built Ram (neé Dodge) is among the best in the business. It has to be to keep pace with the Ford F-150, General Motors' recently renewed Chevrolet Silverado and GMC Sierra, plus maintain its considerable lead over the Toyota Tundra and Nissan Titan.

For 2014, all three domestic pickups offer relatively stout base V6 engines — around the 300-horsepower mark — and impressive levels of fuel conservation. However Ram has taken what for many is the next logical step by adding a turbo-diesel (EcoDiesel in Ram-speak) to its V6 and V8 lineup.

Although a mainstay of the Ram's tougher HD models, there has been no turbo-diesel in the lighter 1500-series pickups. But the new EcoDiesel's timing is ideal since Nissan has a diesel in the works for the next-generation Titan pickup and GM is reportedly developing its own version for the Sierra/Silverado. As Chrysler proved years ago with the 1984 minivan launch, the first one over the wall risks getting bloodied, but also stands to gain a significant advantage over those who follow.

For the 1500-series application, Ram is using the same 3.0-litre turbo-diesel V6 that's optional in the Jeep Grand Cherokee. The engine, which originates from a company in Italy that's now 100 per cent Chrysler-Fiat-owned since former partner GM sold its share, produces 240 horsepower and 420 pound-feet of torque. The engine connects to an eight-speed automatic transmission, as does the 3.6 gas engine, while the V8 comes with a six-speed that can be swapped for the eight-speed.

The Ram EcoDiesel can tow up to 7,200 pounds (3,270 kilograms), which is about the same as the 3.6 V6. The diesel can be added to nearly all of the Ram 1500's trim levels, cab configurations and rear- and four-wheel drivelines, from the near-base ST Quad Cab to the loaded-up Laramie Limited Crew Cab.

Only the base ST regular cab is omitted from the list. Of course there's nothing particularly "Eco" about the Ram 1500 EcoDiesel, or any other 2,700-kilogram brute that burns fossil fuel, but at least the EcoDiesel is cleaner than diesels of old.

As is the case with other automakers' diesels, the Ram's exhaust is treated with a urea-based solution that chemically neutralizes the nasty stuff before exiting the tailpipe. That makes the engine clean enough to pass muster throughout every jurisdiction in North America, but it also means that the urea solution tank will require replenishment every 16,000 kilometres or so.

Fitting the turbo-diesel option to your Ram won't be cheap. Expect $3,000 over and above the price of a 5.7-litre V8, and about $5,000 more than the base V6. That would peg the entry fee in the $33,500 range, including destination charges.

There might not be much payback over the short haul, other than sheer torque, but Chrysler figures about 15 to 20 per cent of Ram customers — likely those who plan on racking up plenty of kilometres over many years — will find taking the EcoDiesel route too tempting to pass up.

2014 Ram EcoDiesel

- **Type.** Two- /Four-door, front- / four-wheel-drive pickup truck
- **Engines (hp).** 3.0-litre DOHC V6, turbo-diesel (240)
- **Transmissions.** Eight-speed automatic
- **Base price (incl. destination)** $33,500

Torque

For serious truckers it's torque that matters most and the EcoDiesel handily beats Ram's base 3.6-litre V6 with its 269-pound-feet and the optional 5.7-litre V8's 410 pound-feet. While the V8's peak torque is close, it comes much higher in the rev range than the diesel's.

Fuel economy

As for fuel economy, Chrysler isn't spilling the precise beans just yet, but based on the numbers earned by the Grand Cherokee, somewhere in the vicinity of 10.0 l/100 km in the city and 7.5 on the highway seems plausible. That would be an improvement compared to the base V6's 11.4/7.8 and the V8's 14.1/9.3 official numbers.

The interior looks stunning and is equipped with today's usual gadgets.

Compare

1 Ford F-150
Base price: $24,250

2 Chevrolet Silverado
Base price: $27,950

3 Toyota Tundra
Base price: $28,100

DRIVE

Horoscopes

♈ Aries
March 21 - April 20
By all means, think big but before you put your latest plan into effect, make sure there are no obvious holes in it. Even a minor error could hold you back, so check, double check, then check again to be safe.

♉ Taurus
April 21 - May 21
Try not to take out your frustrations on friends. It's not their fault you can't seem to get your act together. The only way you are going to improve your mood is to ease up and stop expecting so much of yourself.

♊ Gemini
May 22 - June 21
There is a rational explanation for everything that happens. Keep that in mind today and you'll do fine. However, just because there is an explanation does not mean you will find it. Maybe the time's not right.

♋ Cancer
June 22 - July 23
You may not want to admit that a colleague's big idea is better than your own but everyone else can see it so you might as well accept the fact. It's OK.

♌ Leo
July 24 - Aug. 23
You may think you have to cut back on essentials but that would be a false economy. Just because you take a step backward does not mean you will move forward any faster.

♍ Virgo
Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
By all means, point the finger if you can prove who the guilty party is but if there are any doubts, you must keep your suspicions to yourself. It could be you have got the bad guys and good guys mixed up.

♎ Libra
Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
What you say and do must be consistent or you'll leave yourself open to charges of hypocrisy. That applies on the work front, where colleagues will not be impressed if you fail to practice what you preach.

♏ Scorpio
Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
You may regret having made certain decisions but there is no need to feel sorry for yourself. Nor is there any reason to change course. All roads lead to where you need to go, so just keep walking.

♐ Sagittarius
Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
You want to tell others how you feel but for some reason, the words won't come. Maybe you should take the hint and keep your feelings to yourself, at least for now.

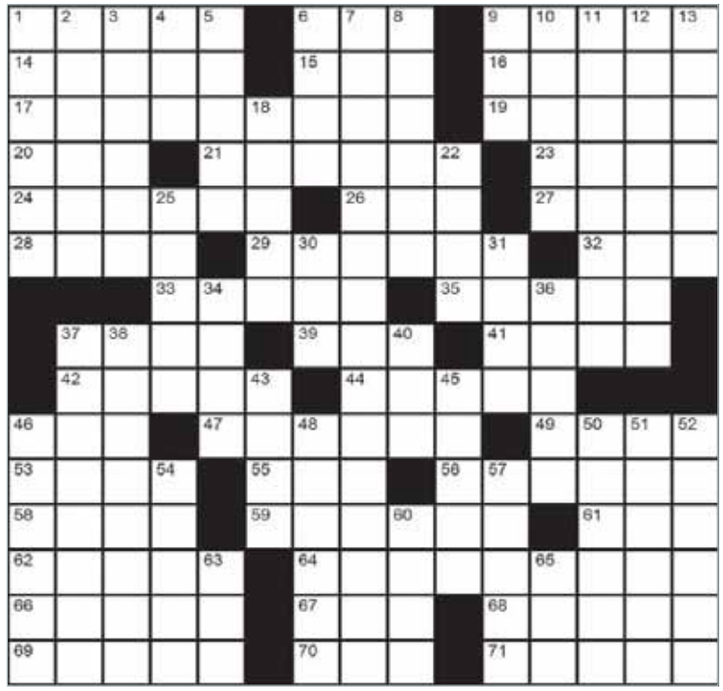
♑ Capricorn
Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
Even a Cap takes a wrong turn sometimes so don't get angry with yourself if you have to retrace your steps today. The worst thing you can do is to blunder ahead regardless. There's a steep drop up ahead.

♒ Aquarius
Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
What is painful in the short term may be beneficial in the long term, so don't give up on what you are doing yet. The more you have to work at something, the more likely it is you will master it.

♓ Pisces
Feb. 20 - March 20
You may have to be economical with the truth today, especially if there is information you need to keep out of the hands of your rivals. SALLY BROMPTON

Crossword: Canada Across and Down

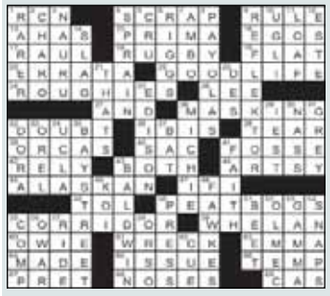
See today's answers at metronews.ca/answers.
BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN



Across
1. Do cartography work again
6. Great Expectations character
9. Capital of Senegal
14. Gladden
15. Record label for Elvis
16. Mary J. of song
17. Nova Scotia community, a name Beatles fans must love
19. ArmÈe du __ = The Salvation Army
20. Tree tool
21. Indicate
23. Nero's 1502
24. Festive strands
26. Hosp. area
27. Tree trunk
28. Formerly
29. Rise
32. "Waking __ Devine" (1998)
33. Butcher shop waste
35. Succeed in life: 2 wds.
37. Dynasty of ancient China
39. __ Mahal
41. Songstress Ms. Simone
42. "The Planets" composer: Gustav __ (b.1874 - d.1934)
44. More recent
46. 'P' in MPH
47. Quash
49. Think, archaically
53. Trompe l'__ (Visual illusion)
55. Mr. Cruise
56. Stick to
58. Rocker Mr. Osbourne
59. Of service
61. FOX cartoon, "American __!"
62. Satellite of Saturn
64. Ex-RCMP officer on "Dragons' Den", Jim __
66. Tennis great Ivan
67. Sanctions
68. Faint trace
69. S s sSssS
70. Clock setting in St. John's, commonly
71. "Egads!"

Down
1. "There's not anything to which you can't __..." - Alanis Morissette, "Everything"
2. Magical potion
3. Experts
4. Lunched
5. As such, Latin style: 2 wds.
6. '70s music genre, __-Rock
7. CN Tower and Parliament Buildings, for example: 2 wds.
8. Princess' house
9. Sound loudness units [abbr.]
10. Gentle as _ __
11. Area of Winnipeg, West __
12. "The Voice" coach Christina
13. Made the score even again
18. Rice dish
22. Breather's need
25. Tavern chair
30. SNL night, for short
31. Finished
34. Be a mother hen
36. Colin of movies
37. Canadian snacks
38. Skylines
40. 'Game' in Gaspe
43. Dancer's dress
45. "__ __ live in a yellow submarine..." - The Beatles
46. Second smartest dog
48. #64-Across' restaurant chain, __ Pizza
50. Stuff in a teacher's correcting pen: 2 wds.
51. Juice source
52. Some higher-heeled shoes
54. "The Hollywood Squares" centre square occupant, Paul __
57. God
60. Top
63. Chicago trains
65. IV + III's equivalent

Yesterday's Crossword



Sudoku

How to play
Fill in the grid, so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved.

	2		8					
8	9					4		6
		6		2				7
3		5		8	1			
	1						4	
			9	4		5		3
4				1		8		
6		2					7	4
					5		3	

Yesterday's Sudoku

2	8	9	3	7	1	6	5	4
7	4	3	6	8	5	2	1	9
1	5	6	2	9	4	3	8	7
6	2	1	7	4	8	5	9	3
4	9	5	1	3	6	8	7	2
3	7	8	5	2	9	4	6	1
5	3	7	9	6	2	1	4	8
8	6	2	4	1	7	9	3	5
9	1	4	8	5	3	7	2	6

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GT model with Technology Package shown. Fully Loaded with Firsts refers to the fact that the listed features are available on the all-new 2014 Mazda3 for the first time ever. Certain features available only on 2014 Mazda3 GS & GT models.
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